



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

#10-913-11
For Immediate Release:
September 15, 2011

Contact:
Japan District Public Affairs
CEPOJ-PA@usace.army.mil

Japan Ground Self Defense Force Engineer School officers visit Japan Engineer District, Camp Zama

EMBARGO

EMBARGO

EMBARGO

EMBARGO

CAMP ZAMA, JAPAN – Last month three Army engineers learned how Japan Ground Self Defense Force engineers are trained in their shared craft when they were hosted at the JGSDF Engineer School at Camp Katsuta by the school commandant, Major General Masafumi Akamatsu. They also learned how to make soba noodles and write kanji.

While no one is likely to become a chef or start a career in calligraphy as a result, Colonel Bryan Truesdell, District Engineer and Commander of Japan District, US Army Corps of Engineers, Captain Thomas Douglas, EN, Forward Engineer Support Team leader, and Captain Jason Webb, EN spent Aug. 31 with students and staff swapping stories and experiences.

Nearly two weeks later, Sept. 13, the Army engineers hosted 13 officer students at Camp Zama as part of the US Army Japan Unit Exchange Program (USEP). For more than 20 years the USARJ and JGSDF Bilateral Engagement Program (BEP) has been a vital and integral part of improving bilateral interoperability and readiness. This program is valued by USARJ and JGSDF leadership.

The purpose of USEP is to provide an occasion for unit leaders of USARJ to meet and exchange ideas and mission-related information with their JGSDF counterparts. At Camp Zama, in addition to receiving mission briefings, the students toured U.S. Army facilities such as the Deployable Medical Systems storage area and Army Material Command at Sagami General Depot. During the question and answer session, class leader Major Haruhiko Miyagawa sought technical details. "I asked how the command decision was made during Operation Tomodachi and was surprised to hear how quickly the U.S. Army responded," he said.

"We were in awe when we saw the U.S. Army facilities and their capabilities at Sagami Depot," said Major Norotaka Takeuchi, an officer student who is preparing to lead troops in his next assignment. "We enjoyed the entire day and we appreciated the opportunity to see it first hand," he added.

The day ended with a friendly game of ultimate Frisbee and a barbeque dinner at Camp Zama's Dewey Park. Douglas said he was glad the events proceeded well. "The Japanese showed great respect and professionalism when we visited, so we wanted to return the favor."

-30-

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – JAPAN DISTRICT

USAED-J Unit 40510
APO, AP 96338-5010

In this photo, Japan Engineer District Commander Colonel Bryan Truesdell presents Japan Ground Self Defense Force Engineer School instructor Lieutenant Colonel Norimichi Umakoshi a baseball cap as a gesture to conclude the day and continue the strong relationship. 110913-A-BJ894-001. (Official USACE Japan District photo by Satoshi Oka).



Below, CPT Thomas Douglas, EN, practices writing the kanji word ‘tomo’ for friend during the visit to the Japan Ground Self Defense Force Engineer School at Camp Katsuta Aug. 31. (Official USACE Japan District photo by Satoshi Oka)



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – JAPAN DISTRICT
USAED-J Unit 40510
APO, AP 96338-5010